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TAJIKISTAN

PRESS RELEASE

THE UNITED STATES WORKS WITH TAJIK SPECIALISTS TO STRENGTHEN AND ENHANCE SURVEILLANCE AND RESPONSE TO AVIAN INFLUENZA

Khujand, Tajikistan, August 8, 2007: The U.S. Government, through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the U.S. Departments of State, Health and Human Services (HHS), and Agriculture (USDA), are coordinating with the Government of Tajikistan to improve the country's preparedness and response to the highly pathogenic Avian Influenza.

Since the first outbreaks of the virus reported in Kazakhstan in the summer of 2006, USAID launched a program providing technical assistance to the Governments of the Central Asian countries to strengthen and enhance surveillance and response to this deadly form of influenza. Through assistance provided by USAID funded Winrock International, experience gained in Kazakhstan and other countries reporting outbreaks of the disease resulted in the development and design of a training program for leading veterinary and laboratory specialists. The program is designed to build the capacity of local veterinary services staff to effectively and efficiently survey and monitor for potential outbreaks of the disease.

The Director of USAID Tajikistan office, Carolyn Bryan, today opened a training program for leading veterinary and laboratory specialists in the Sughd Oblast. This training program is one of the three similar planned for specialists from all regions of Tajikistan aimed at strengthening and enhancing surveillance and response to the highly pathogenic Avian Influenza.

The Winrock International project is funded through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and is part of the United States overseas foreign assistance program funded by the American people. Since 1992 the American people through USAID have provided more than \$270 million in assistance programs supporting economic growth, democratic institutions, health care and education systems of Tajikistan.

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